

**Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners  
Minutes of Meeting Held On January 8, 2019**

The Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners held a meeting on January 8, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Delaware Department of Education, Townsend Building, 401 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901.

The following Council members were present: Javier Torrijos, Michael Rodriguez, Terri Sharpe, Heather Cramer, Steven Amendum, Bridget Amory, Allison Burris Castellanos, Oribel McFann, Brody Bluemel, Robert Rescigno, Senator David Sokola and Margie Lopez-Waite.

The following Council members were absent: Ana Viscarra-Gikas, John Marinucci Valentina Maza, Rep. Sean Matthews, Dusty Blakey, Clara Martinez, Maria Matos, Margie Lopez-Waite and Georges Odaris

The following individuals were also present: Dr. Susan Bunting, Maria Paxson, and Jose Aviles

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

At 6:00 p.m., Javier Torrijos called the meeting to order.

**2. Review and Approval of November 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Javier Torrijos directed Council members to review meeting minutes. No changes were requested.

A motion was made by Oribel McFann-Mora and seconded by Bridget Amory for approval of the November meeting minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously and meeting minutes were approved.

**3. Council Officer Terms**

Council co-chair, Javier Torrijos reviewed the by-laws and the one-year term for the council secretary. A discussion occurred to clarify that the one-year term was not on the calendar year but rather from the start of the council. The council members agreed with this interpretation of the by-laws. Oribel Mc-Fann Mora will remain the secretary through June 2019.

**4. Review of 2018 Annual Report**

Javier Torrijos reviewed the final 2018 Annual Report. In response to the report Dr. Susan Bunting provided an overview of some key initiatives occurring at the Department and thanked the council for their continued focus. Maria Paxson, Education Associate for English Learners provided updates in relation the recommendations from the council report to the Delaware Department of Education. Maria Paxson shared that the data requested would be available for the March council meeting.

## **5. Setting the Stage for 2019**

Javier Torrijos asked the council to think about the additional information needed by the council in order to provide successful recommendations in future years.

Bridget Amory cautioned the council to be mindful of work that is already occurring in the state and not broadening the scope of the council's charge. Bridget reminded the council to connect all future recommendations to Delaware's English Learner Strategic Plan.

A suggestion was made by council member, Mike Rodriguez to have the Delaware Department of Education provide standing updates at each council meeting. The council agreed that this would be helpful in grounding the future work of the council.

Council members discussed the importance of being able to share the collaborative work of each subcommittee. A suggestion was made to create a shared virtual space for council documents. A request was made to the Department of Education to create a Schoology group for all council members to access documents.

Several members of the council expressed interest in visiting some of the school programs supporting English learners and their families. A request was made to set up school visits, visits to family literacy programs and additional engagement activities. An invitation to the Milford School District ELympics event to be held on February 9, 2019 was extended to council members by Bridget Amory.

Brody Bluemel suggested that council members should also consider the voice of current and former English learners as well as their families in determining strategies for support.

Senator David Sokola shared an article on blended learning for English learners and discussed the current success that Utah is having in the implementation of this initiative.

## **6. Subcommittee Reports**

Goal 1 Report: Bridget Amory and Steven Ammendum shared that the subcommittee is currently determining the top three strategies where they will focus their efforts. The subcommittee is conducting an analysis of what is currently occurring in this goal area in an attempt to build on existing structures.

Goal 2 Report: Robert Rescigno and Heather Cramer shared the subcommittee will be meeting again in February. They have identified a need to engage with the legislature to continue to push for additional funding for English learners. Robert Rescigno mentioned the need to look at teacher preparation programs and how deeply these programs are supporting educators in meeting the needs of English learners.

Goal 3 Report: Javier Torrijos reviewed Executive Order 7-16 from Philadelphia. Javier explained that the subcommittee is interested in recommending that all state agencies adopt a language access plan. Bridget Amory requested that we invite individuals from Philadelphia to further explain this process to the council. Javier Torrijos stated that he would reach out to request a virtual presentation from the agency.

Goal 4 Report: Oribel McFann-Mora shared that this subcommittee is currently establishing meeting dates for the year. The group will be determining the best way to recognize schools and providing input on a new English Learner Data Report.

## **6. Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

## **7. Preparation for Next Meeting and Adjournment**

At 8:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the Townsend Building, 401 Federal Street in Dover.

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